Vol. 2. Numb. 2.

THE REHEARSAL.

1. The Argument of the *Dissenters*, that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are the same, Exemplify'd in the word *Imperator*.
2. Disprov'd, from the *Succession* of the *Churches* being Reckon'd only by the *Succession* of the *Bishops*.
3. The Weakness of Arguments from *Etymologies*.
4. Objection of the *Dissenters*, that *Episcopacy* Crept in by *Degrees*, as other *Erroneous* Opinions.
5. This will not hold in Matters of *Government*. That *Species* of *Government* whose *Beginning* we know not, must be from the *Beginning*. This *Rule* verify'd in *Episcopacy*, as in *Monarchy* against *Commonwealths*.
6. But not in the *Supremacy* of the *Pope*, the *Beginning* of which we know.
7. As also of the *Doctrinal* points in Dispute betwixt Us and the *Church* of *Rome*.

WEDNESDAY, *October* 15. 1707.

(1.) *Country-man.* I have been Teaz'd upon your Last, *Master*, and must tell you some Objections I have met with. They tell me that the word *Presbyter* sometimes Signifies a *Bishop*, and the word *Bishop* sometimes Signifies a *Presbyter*, and therefore that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are the same thing.

Rehearsal. Thus the word *Imperator* which we Translate *Emperor* Sometimes Signifies the *General* of an *Army*, or any other *Commander*, for the word signifies *Commander*. And we know that many *Command* besides the *Emperor* himself. Now suppose any, to shew his *Wit* or *Learning*, shou'd set up a new *Hypotheses*, and say, That ther never was an *Emperor* in *Rome*; And support this by abundance of *Quotations* out of the *Roman* Authors where the General of an *Army* was Call'd *Imperator*, and thence shou'd Argue that *Cæsar* or *Augustus* or any other of the *Roman Emperors* were no more than bare *Generals* of *Armies*, but had Nothing to do in *Civil* affairs, or were any *Civil Magistrates* at all.

Country-m. I suppose every body wou'd *Laugh* at him, or, if he were in Earnest, think him a *Mad* man. Because he play'd with *words* against plain *Fact*. And all the *Histories* of those times wou'd Contradict him and shew his *Folly*. When I see the *Pictures* of the 12 *Cæsars* or *Emperors* of *Rome*: I mean so many *Kings* with *Regal* Power, and I have been always told so, and never heard any body say otherwise.

(2.) *Rehearsal.* And the *Succession* of the *Roman Empire* was Deduc'd in the *Succession* of their *Emperors*. And it is told when one *Emperor* did *Succeed* another. Ther were many *Imperatores* that is *Generals* in every one of these *Reigns*, as it is with us; But the *Government* was not Deduc'd in the *Succession* of these *Generals*, but only of their *Kings* or *Emperors*, In the proper acceptation of the *Word*, as *Kings*.

And I will Appeal to any Learned *Dissenter* in *England*, Whether in the *Ecclesiastical Histories* the *Succession* of all the *Churches* is not Reckon'd by the *Succession* of the *Bishops* alone, and not of the *Presbyters* or *Deacons*.

Country-m. That makes the Case Clear. And that the *Bishops* were the *Governors* of the *Churches*. And as you said last time, How cou'd these *Bishops* have Thrust themselves thus into the Chief *Government* all the World over, without any *Opposition*, and to be *own'd* as such and *Acknowledg'd* by All, if the Original *Institution* had been *Presbytery* or any other *Frame* of *Government*? Or if ther were *Presbyterians* in those Days, (as our *Presbyterians* woud have us believe) they were much more *Moderate* and *Complaisant* than our *Presbyterians*, to let the *Bishops* Usurp upon their *Authority*, and Engross all into their own Hands, without so much as one *Remonstrance*, or the least *Snarle* from any of them!

(3.) *Rehearsal.* None then did Object that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were the same thing, from the *Etymology* of the *Words*. Such *Trifling* wou'd not then have been Endur'd! They knew very well, that the word Επισκοπος which we Translate *Bishop*, Signify'd an *Overseer*, in which sense every *Shepherd* may be call'd

call'd an Ἐπίσκοπος much more any *Presbyter* or *Paſtor* in the *Church*. The *Etymology* of the word Πρεσβύτερος is *Elder-Man*, which we call *Alderman*; and the *Seniores* or *Elders* was us'd to Expreſs *Authority*, and not only *Age*, as the *Elders*, that is, the *Chief* or *Heads* of the *People*, an Expreſſion frequent in *Scripture*. Hence *Ambaſſadors* have been call'd *Presbyters*, and other *Great Men*, or in Great *Employments*. Now if any man ſhou'd Infer from this, That every *Ambaſſador* or *Alderman* of the *City* were a *Clergyman*, and of the Degree of *Presbyter* in the *Church*. I ſuppoſe he cou'd Perſwade but a few. The word Διάκονος ſignifies a *Miniſter* or *Servant*; and *Rom.* xv. 8. *Chriſt* is call'd Διάκονος ſhall we Argue therefore, That *Chriſt* is no more than of the Order of *Deacon* in the *Church*? Such and no Better are the Arguments, from the *Etymology* of Words, that *Biſhops* are no more than *Presbyters*.

(4.) *Countrym:* Such poor Stuff as this Frets even my Patience! But, *Maſter*, they ſay, That *Epiſcopacy* did not come in all at *Once*, but Encroach'd by *Degrees*.

Rehearſ. Very well. Then let them ſhew when it *Began*. And we will Reckon for the *Encroachments* afterwards.

Country-m. They ſay, ther are many *Errors* whoſe *Beginning* we do not know, and yet we may Diſcover them to be *Errors* afterwards. That the *Tares* were ſown while the *Husband-Men* ſlept, but were not *Diſcover'd* till they were grown up. Thus that *Erroneous Opinions* may be Inſtill'd from one to another, and Propagat a long Time before the World takes *Publick Notice* of them; And no body may be able *Then* to tell who was the firſt *Broacher*.

(5.) *Rehearſ.* This may be in *Opinions*, which are *Broach'd* and *Propagated* in the *Dark*. But *Government* is not a thing of this Nature. It is always *Publick* and before every Man's *Face*. And when it is *Alter'd* or *Overthrown*, every Man has a *Share* in it, and *Feels* it, it Affects him and his *Circumſtances* more or leſs. And no *Hiſtory* of thoſe Times can miſs taking *Notice* of it. Now *Epiſcopacy* is *Government*. And cou'd not be Introduc'd but upon the Ruin of that *Government* (whatever it was) which was before it. Therefore I deſire the *Diſſenters* to ſhew me the *Beginning* of *Epiſcopacy*. For that *Government* (however it be as to Privat *Opinions*) whoſe *Beginning* we know not, muſt have been from the *Beginning*. Thus no man can fix the Time when *Monarchy* began in the World ſince *Adam*, or the *Diviſion* of the *Nations* after the *Flood*. And this is a Demonſtration that the *Original* of *Monarchy* was from Thence, and did not *Begin* in any After time. But we can Punctually tell the *Beginning* of every *Common-Wealth* in the World, all *Hiſtories* of thoſe Times do tell it.

And thus, no Man can tell the *Beginning* of *Epiſcopacy* at any time ſince the *Apoſtles*. But we all know the *Beginning* of *Presbytery*, that there was no *Presbyterian Church* in the World before *John Calvin*.

Now you ſee the Reaſon I had to Demand from the *Diſſenters*, That they wou'd ſhew the *Time* when *Epiſcopacy* did *Begin*. For if they cannot Shew it, they muſt own *Epiſcopacy* to have Deſcended all the way from the *Apoſtles*.

(6.) *Country-m.* But is not an *Univerſal Biſhop* over all the *Biſhops* and *Churches* in the World a Great *Change* in the *Government* of the *Church*? And the *Church* of *Rome* pretends to have Deriv'd this *Form* of *Government* all the way down from St. *Peter*. Therefore, by your own Argument, you are oblig'd to ſhew the *Time* when this *Univerſal Biſhop* did firſt ſet up at *Rome*.

Rehearſ. This we do with great Readineſs. The firſt that Aſſum'd to be *Univerſal Biſhop* was *John* Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*; againſt whom *Gregory* I. call'd the *Great*, wrote with much Spirit, and ſaid that none of his own Predeceſſors *Biſhops* of *Rome* did ever Aſſume ſuch an Arrogant *Title*, which he calls likewiſe *Blaſphemous*, and ſaid that whoever did Arrogat it to himſelf, was a *Lucifer* for Pride, and the *Fore-runner* of Anti-Chriſt.

Yet Pope *Boniface* 3. next Succeſſor but one to *Greg.* I. thok this *Title*, given him by *Phocas* that *Tyrant* and *Uſurper*, who firſt *Depos'd* and then *Murder'd* his Maſter *Mauricius* the *Emperor*. This was in the *Seventh Century*. And from that *Beginning* we ſhew the *Progreſs* of this *Uſurpation* of the *Popes*, and the Struggle of the *Biſhops* againſt it, in many Inſtances, even at the *Council* of *Trent*, and very Remarkably in the year 1682. by the Memorable *Decrees* then made by the whole Body of the *Biſhops* and *Clergy* of *France*. Which if you have not ſeen, you may find *Verbatim* in the *Appendix* at the End of *The Caſe of the Regale* &c. p. 270. of 2d. *Edition*. Printed, 1701. But it wou'd fill a *Hiſtory* to tell of the Oppoſition made by particular *Biſhops* and other *Learned* Men.

(7.) And not only as to this Point of *Government*, but even in the *Doctrinal* Diſputes we have with the *Church* of *Rome* (whoſe *Beginnings* are leſs Obvious) as of *Purgatory*, *Invocation* of *Saints*, *Trans-ſubſtantiation*, *Half Communion*, *Prayers* in an *Unknown Tongue* &c. in all theſe Caſes, we are able to tell the *Beginnings* of them, and the *Time* when there was no ſuch thing. Let this be ſhew'd of *Epiſcopacy*.

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